

# Brethren Evangelist

"I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life."—Jesus

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## Editorial

### Not at Home

Owing to the absence of the editor from home, editorial matter, except first page, is omitted from this issue of the paper. The usual departments will appear next week.

### By Its Fruits

Since the death of Colonel Ingersoll, agnosticism has furnished no apostle able to fill his place, an omission which the world has no very good reason to regret. Leaders of the cult there are, however, among men of education and talent, and its following is doubtless more numerous than ever, for, as long as the world stands, men will continue to ask reason to perform the impossible task of justifying the rejection of faith. In lieu of the poverty of sound logic against religion, they will accept the ready service of wit, ridicule, credulity, anything that will benumb conscience, and silence the protesting voices which arise from the nature of the soul.

Infidelity is a negation. It says "no" to every hope, and "yes" to nothing but a doubt. It is wholly destructive and not at all constructive. It builds no colleges, hospitals, orphan asylums; fosters no humanities, cherishes no civilizations. It takes away what light we have and leaves in its place nothing but darkness. It robs us of our present comfort, but offers no better, in fact, none at all. It pulls down the house over our heads and leaves us standing in arctic cold. In answer to all the pathetic questioning of the human heart concerning the end of sorrow, the end of death, and the beginning of the true, the satisfying life, it either replies with a "no" or a "don't know." Would any sane man consult an adviser of that kind in his business perplexities?

All the reformers, leaders of men, new era makers and martyrs of the world have been faith men. Unbelief furnishes none of this kind because unbelief cannot be self sacrificing. It will give nothing for a principle. It will not propagate its own principles at a financial loss, or at the cost of physical suffering. As Colonel Ingersoll once said: "A thumbscrew would make him sign any creed under heaven." The whole fabric of modern civilization, its light and liberty, its progress and power, the very existence of society, rests,

as every intelligent reader of history knows, upon the protest of the martyrs, upon that stand for truth, often for dogmatic truth, its less essential form, to which they testified with their lives, and for which they bore indescribable tortures. The incalculable service which they rendered to mankind, a service which will become more and more valuable as time flows on down thru the ages to the end, was a service of faith, of a sifted faith, for men will not die but for what they are sure that they believe. Had they all been Ingersolls, the world today would be an inferno second only to the dream of the immortal Florentine.

As we have remarked, unbelief is destructive, and not constructive. Voltaire could bring upon the world a French Revolution, but Napoleon had to restore religion as the only possible foundation of social and political order. The total absence of religion is the equivalent of total anarchy. There is certainly no religion in the pandemoniums of literature, and when the Tartarean dreams of the great poets, of Milton, of Pollock, of Dante, took tangible form and substance in the most notable catastrophes of history, they were seen to be in this respect perfectly characteristic. In the light of these facts what a transparent fraud is agnosticism. How is it possible that anybody can be deceived by a philosophy which in its sequence, the final test of all philosophies and theories of religion, offers absolutely nothing but a box and a hole in the ground, but in the meantime reduces society to such a state of anarchy that the box and the hole in the ground become the most coveted refuge of its unhappy victims.

Every man owes to himself, to his children, to his generation, to the world, to posterity, this debt, which always paying he can never pay, and yet upon the constant payment of which he builds up his own manhood, wins life, redeems his race, helps to bring in the golden age. That debt is to believe some saving truth, honestly and with his whole heart. Let him believe all the truth that he can see, but for the sake of all that is holy, let him shovel out of his creed that which he does not really and truly believe. What remains, what he does believe, let him believe so deeply, so honestly, so thoroughly, that no sacrifice would turn him aside from it. He will not find this shifting process a painless one. Shallow men will impute to him inconstancy, inconsistency, even baser things, but for all this he will find abundant compensation in the consciousness that there is no controversy between his mouth and his soul, his profession and his life.